

Amateur Radio Newsline Report #2047 for Friday, January 20th, 2017

*** CLOSED CIRCUIT ADVISORY ****

The following is a closed circuit advisory and not for broadcast.

Newscast #2047 is an expanded edition of Amateur Radio Newsline, containing a tribute to Charlie Emerson N4OKL of the Huntsville Hamfest, who has become a Silent Key. This newscast has three segments and there are two breaks for identification.

And now, here's this week's anchor, Jim Damron N8TMW.

**

Amateur Radio Newsline Report Number 2047 with a release date of Friday, January 20, 2017 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a QST. Congress gets a new Amateur Radio Parity Act. There a new efforts to save an imperiled New York repeater -- and we devote a special segment to Huntsville's Charlie Emerson N4OKL, Silent Key. All this and more as Amateur Radio Newsline Report 2047 comes your way right now.

**

BILLBOARD CART

**

BREAKING NEWS: DISCUSSIONS ATTEMPT TO SAVE LONG ISLAND REPEATER

JIM/ANCHOR: We begin this week with a late development on the fate of an imperiled Long Island, New York repeater. Amateur Radio Newsline's Paul Braun WD9GCO has an update.

PAUL: A dialogue has begun between Delaware North, the new owner of the hotel that is home to 2 Long Island repeaters, and John Melfi, W2HCB, the emergency coordinator for the nearby suburban Town of Babylon. Both sides are hoping to resolve the issue and prevent the repeaters' eviction. The parties are now in the process of drafting a memorandum of understanding in the hopes of keeping the threatened repeaters where they are. Nothing has been resolved yet, however, and we continue to follow this story. For Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Paul Braun WD9GCO.

**

U.S. HOUSE GETS AMATEUR RADIO PARITY ACT

JIM/ANCHOR: There's also big news on Capitol Hill. Lawmakers on Washington, D.C.'s Capitol Hill are calling it H.R. 555, but hams also know it as the Amateur Radio Parity Act. The measure was reintroduced on Friday, Jan. 13 into the 115th Congress, where it is sponsored by Congressman Adam Kinzinger, an Illinois Republican. His cosponsors are Congressman Joe Courtney, a Connecticut Democrat and Congressman Greg Walden W7EQI, a Republican from Oregon. Walden is also chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce where the new bill is headed. It will first get consideration in the subcommittee on Communications and Technology.

The act directs the Federal Communications Commission to prohibit the application of deed restrictions that ban amateur radio operations. Hams are hoping Walden's outspoken support of the bill's previous version will help it gain traction again.

★★

HISTORIC SHORTWAVE SITE TO BE CLEARED

JIM/ANCHOR: On a marshy section of New Jersey coastline known as Good Luck Point, the final bits of radio history are about to disappear. We hear more from Amateur Radio Newsline's Neil Rapp WB9VPG.

NEIL: Luck has finally run out for the coastal New Jersey site, Good Luck Point. It was home to Ocean Gate radio, the Atlantic coast hub for the high seas shortwave service of American Telephone and Telegraph. The service provided phone communications to ships at sea and used the call sign W00.

Now, the federal government wants the site cleared.

Beginning in the early 1930s, it was home to a transmitter station providing vital links between the shore and U.S. ships. Its operation allowed mariners to make telephone calls simply by contacting the AT&T marine operator. This was, of course, right up to the dawn of cellular phone service. The transmitter worked with a receiver about 15 miles south on the salt marsh and both were also part of AT&T's national long lines system.

The stations provided single-sideband radiotelephone service until AT&T halted that practice in 1999. The New Jersey sites eventually were abandoned and Good Luck Point was bought in 2003 by a nonprofit trust for donation to the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge, which suffered major damage during superstorm Sandy in 2012, is now being cleaned up and cleared out. That cleanup includes 500 antennas and poles. Some poles, however, will remain on long after evidence of radio activity is gone: They'll be used as platforms to support nests for osprey, which are federally protected.

For Amateur Radio Newsline I'm Neil Rapp, WB9VPG.

(WORKBOAT.COM)

★★

PORT ELIZABETH CONTEST A 44-HOUR RADIO FEST

JIM/ANCHOR: Hams in the Republic of South Africa are focusing attention on the VHF and UHF bands -- and maybe a little camping out too. Here's Amateur Radio Newsline's Jason Daniels VK2LAW.

JASON: Think of it as 44 hours of making long-distance contacts, setting records and following changes in propagation on the VHF and UHF bands. It's the Port Elizabeth Amateur Radio Society's annual VHF and UHF contest, where the ultimate goal is to stimulate activity on these bands, whether in digital or analogue mode. Because both 22-hour sessions are designed to reflect changing propagation, operators are advised to watch for Tropo Ducting or Meteor Scatter in the mornings or at night on 2 meters and 6 meters, and to be mindful of Aircraft scatter, Sporadic-E and Rover stations during the day. The competition heats up on Friday, Jan. 20th and ends on Sunday, Jan. 22nd.

According to the Port Elizabeth organizers, the contest is also a great opportunity to do some camping and set up field stations. If you are a licensed amateur in the Republic of South Africa or any neighboring states, this competition is for you.

For Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jason Daniels, VK2LAW

(PORT ELIZABETH AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY)

★★

THE 60 METER COMMUNITY GROWS

JIM/ANCHOR: More countries are joining the roster of nations enjoying 60 meter privileges as we learn from Amateur Radio Newsline's John Williams VK4JJW.

JOHN: The world community of amateurs transmitting on 60 meters just expanded again by two more nations. Slovenia's telecommunications regulator has approved use of the band in that nation, beginning with a temporary three-month license. That license extends from January 11th through April 11th and covers 5351.5 kHz to 5366.5 kHz with a 15w EIRP. Meanwhile, Niger's telecommunications regulator has approved the use of 60 meters there, just in time for the upcoming 5U5R DXpedition to Niger in March. Their operation, which will cover CW and SSB, is expected to be around 5360 kHz. Slovenia and Niger join Kazakhstan, which also recently gained access to the band. The United States has no widespread 60 meter privileges beyond five frequency channels on Upper Sideband, with each channel having a bandwidth of 2.8 kHz.

For Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm John Williams VK4JJW.

(SOUTHGATE AMATEUR RADIO NEWS)

★★

ESSEX RAYNET ANSWERS FLOOD OF REQUESTS

JIM/ANCHOR: Ham radio response was strong and swift when severe weather struck in the county of Essex in the UK recently. We hear more from Amateur Radio Newsline's Jeremy Boot G4NJH.

JEREMY: The radio amateurs of Essex RAYNET have a lot to be proud of, even as rain, winds and flooding bore down on the UK county recently. Hams were placed on standby on Thursday, Jan. 12, as weather intensified. By the early morning hours of Friday, Jan. 13, as high tides approached, area evacuations had begun and the hams were put into action. Essex RAYNET established a control station at the district emergency response center of Tendring District Council and made use of cross-band repeaters. The repeaters aided with local coverage and functioned on a county-wide level for members en-route to give assistance. Essex RAYNET also deployed a team to the emergency rest center at the Tendring Education Center and another to the Frobisher School to assist with the evacuation.

At one point, the hams along with other volunteers and council officials had been active for 24 hours as evacuations continued through the evening of Friday, Jan. 13. By Saturday morning, however, risks had greatly diminished and residents were able to return home and the RAYNET hams were stood down. They headed home, some having logged more than 40 hours of service.

For Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jeremy Boot G4NJH

★★

BREAK HERE: Time for you to identify your station. We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world, including WW7SEA, the Columbia Center Repeater in Seattle, Washington at 444.550 MHz on Mondays at 9 pm local time.

★★

NOVICE RIG ROUNDUP NOT JUST FOR OLDTIMERS

JIM/ANCHOR: If you're feeling nostalgic for the good old days - even if you're too young to remember them - this next story, from Amateur Radio Newsline's Kent Peterson KC0DGY, is for you:

KENT: Let me take you back to a thrilling time of yesteryear, when chirpy rigs and sloppy code could be regularly heard coming from novice CW stations.

BRI: Back in the old days of the novice license, you would hear these guys running these rigs quite often there would be a little bit of chirp on the signal or it

might drift around and would sound quite different from today's store-bought rigs.

KENT: That's Bri Carling AF4K who is organizing the Novice Rig Roundup. He says it will be 9 days of fun operating with old-fashioned radio equipment from the 40s, 50s and 60s including Drake, Hallicrafters, Hammerland, Heath, homebrew and QRP rigs.

BRI: We're going to be recapturing some of that nostalgic feeling when they operated these old rigs. A lot of people still have them and can put them on the air and have fun with them.

KENT: And there are a few calls to really listen for:

BRI: There are a few guys who still have their original novice call sign -- in which case those folks will be attracting a lot of attention.

KENT: Just call CQ NRR. That's what you'll be hearing all up and down 40, 80, 15 and 10 meters usually operating in the higher end of the CW sub-bands.

BRI: They'll be exchanging the usual information: RST, power level. It's a little more casual than your typical contest.

KENT Hey, maybe some sloppy code?

BRI: Ha Ha, you will hear some sloppy code but you will hear some good code too. We run the gamut from people who might be getting back into CW or those just learning CW to folks who are experienced A1 operators.

KENT: So dust off that old CW novice rig and get on the air starting at zero hundred hours UTC on February 18th through 2359 hours UTC on February 26, for 9 full days of the Novice Rig Roundup.

For Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Kent Peterson KC0DGY

JIM/ANCHOR: The roundup ends with a random prize drawing among hams who record 10 or more confirmed QSOs using the NRR Logging program. The prize? Winner's choice of a Camelback Straight Key or a Bug from Vizkey.

★★

AN IDEA WORTH SCOUTING OUT

JIM/ANCHOR: In late December, Amateur Radio Newsline reported about updates being made to Scouting's Radio Merit Badge. We've just gotten in a few more details, which Newsline's Joe Moell (MELL) K-zero-O-V, shares with us now. Joe is also ARRL's Amateur Radio Direction Finding Coordinator.

JOE'S REPORT: It started as the Wireless Merit Badge in 1918 and has become one of

the most popular Scouting achievements. About 7000 Scouts qualify for the Radio Merit Badge each year. The newest badge requirements list includes an option for Amateur Radio Direction Finding, or ARDF.

Scouts are encouraged to build a simple direction-finding antenna and to participate in an on-foot radio foxhunt on the 2-meter or 80-meter band. In addition, the radio broadcasting section now includes internet streaming, and cellular telephone topics have been added.

The updates were authored by Jim Wilson K5ND, who is former Director of Communication Services at the Boy Scouts of America and is the current president of the K2BSA Amateur Radio Association. Jim decided to add ARDF after his experience at USA's ARDF Championships last April. The new section was then reviewed by leading members of ham radio's ARDF community. The new Radio Merit Badge will be offered during the National Scout Jamboree in West Virginia during July, where a complete ARDF course will be set up and equipment will be available.

If you're a fan of hidden transmitter hunting, get together with the Scout leaders in your community to help them give the ARDF experience to Scouts and to offer the new Radio Merit Badge. More about the badge updates is available at K2BSA.org, that's K2BSA.org. Information about ARDF, including simple antennas and how to set up foxhunting courses, is at www.homingin.com. That's homingin, as one word, homingin.com.

From southern California, where ARDF is a part of Jamboree-on-the-air every year, this is Joe Moell K00V for Amateur Radio Newsline.

**

ZANE GREY EVENT

JIM/ANCHOR: There's nothing like classic American cowboy fiction - except, perhaps a ham radio event honoring one of the genre's masters. For those details, we turn to Amateur Radio Newsline's Mike Askins KE5CXP.

MIKE: When it comes to classic fiction, you can't get drama more western than Zane Grey. The master novelist brought the romance of American cowboy life to generations of readers as he spun his novels, 26 of which are set, at least partly, in Arizona. Perhaps his most famous is "Riders of the Purple Sage," published in 1912. A different kind of western drama will unfold starting Jan. 28 inside the now-historic Zane Grey Cabin, where he lived and wrote in Payson, Arizona. Members of the Tonto Amateur Radio Association will be on the HF bands as Special Event Station K7Z, marking the novelist's birthday. Hams will operate from the cabin itself on Saturday, Jan. 28th and Tuesday, Jan. 31st, as well as their own QTHs.

Event organizer Bruce Sperka AD7MM said that his wife Marilyn KI7DLK is a

volunteer at the Rim Country Museum next door to the cabin, and the museum agreed to cosponsor the event. He said it was a natural to incorporate Jan. 31, the author's birthday, into the activity and that Bruce Johnson N7DDT, president of ham club, was excited that the event could also raise radio's public profile.

Despite temperatures inside the cabin expected to reach as low as 30 degrees Fahrenheit this time of year, the club is prepared to give a warm welcome to visitors. Who knows? What they see and hear may feel a little like the same kind of high adventure of a Zane Grey cowboy novel, radio style.

For Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mike Askins KE5CXP.

(TONTON AMATEUR RADIO ASSOCIATION)

★★

AN AUSSIE HAM BY ANY OTHER NAME....

JIM/ANCHOR: Happy Australia Day.....well, almost. Hams down under are in for a good time, and Amateur Radio Newsline's Graham Kemp VK4BB has details.

GRAHAM: So you think you know all your friends' call signs? Guess again. On Thursday the 26th of January - Australia Day - all we Aussie radio amateurs get to substitute our normal VK callsign prefix with the letters AX. All of a sudden, ham radio operators Down Under will find they're more popular than ever since contacting an AX call sign is a big deal for many operators who are also prefix collectors. The prefix privilege is being granted automatically by the ACMA following negotiations with the Wireless Institute of Australia.

Of course, there's another reason Australia Day is so special and it has nothing to do with callsigns: the occasion commemorates the First Fleet's arrival at Sydney Cove in 1788 and the creation of a European settlement at Port Jackson. Expect to see national flags and be sure to cover your ears if you don't like fireworks - there'll be plenty of that kind of QRM too.

For Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Graham Kemp VK4BB.....soon to be AX4BB.

(WIRELESS INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA)

★★

JIM/ANCHOR: Also, on a personal note, in Australia, we'd like to congratulate the Central Coast Amateur Radio Club located just north of Sydney in Australia on the anniversary in 2017 of their 60th. year of operation and wish them success with their Hamfest on February 26th. at Wyong race course, which remains the largest gathering of radio hams in the Southern Hemisphere.

★★

BREAK HERE:

Time for you to identify your station. We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world, including the K7MRG repeater in Prescott, Arizona on Tuesday evenings.

★★

REMEMBERING HUNTSVILLE HAMFEST'S CHARLIE EMERSON N4OKL, SK

JIM/ANCHOR: This special third segment of our report is devoted to remembering Charlie Emerson N4OKL, a prime mover behind the Huntsville Hamfest. We hear from Amateur Radio Newsline's Don Wilbanks AE5DW and Neil Rapp WB9VPG. First, Neil:

NEIL: The Board members of Huntsville Hamfest Association have announced that Charlie Emerson, N4OKL, became a silent key on January 14, 2017 due to an apparent heart attack. Charlie was the current President of Huntsville Hamfest Association, a position he had held for many years. Under Charlie's leadership, the Huntsville Hamfest maintained its growth and position in the Amateur Radio industry as one of the top hamfest organizations in the nation. Charlie was the face of the Huntsville Hamfest among amateur radio equipment manufacturers, dealers, and attending ham operators. Charlie will be remembered as always laughing, telling jokes, and acting as peacemaker whenever necessary... all part of making the hamfest known as the World's Friendliest Hamfest.

Huntsville Hamfest was Charlie's pride and joy, and he never missed an opportunity to promote the show or ham radio as a hobby. He was always anxious to support organizations in the development of young hams in areas of science and technology through ham radio, such as our Bill Pasternak Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year award.

Huntsville Hamfest Association board member Art Davis, N4UC, recalls how Charlie started volunteering as a relatively new ham, which soon led to organizing the event, and how he handled a long standing group of engineers and scientists that made up the team.

ART: A hamfest this size is a pretty big job. Charlie just took to it, took it by the horns, and we've done well. You know, we were fortunate to have him when he came on board.

NEIL: One of the frequent vendors at the hamfest, Scott Cole, KB9AMM, from Tower Electronics, saw Charlie's leadership potential from the beginning.

SCOTT: I wasn't surprised when he ended up taking over the chairmanship because he has the right hootspa to do exactly that. He was great in organizing things. He

was great in figuring out problems and overcoming things. And, he wasn't afraid to go head over heels into something right off the bat.

NEIL: And Scott also remembers Charlie going the extra mile.

SCOTT: I remember another time, a year or so ago, when we got to Huntsville and we had brake problems with one of our vehicles and were kind of stranded. And, we thought... let's give Charlie a try once. So, we had gotten a hold of him and he showed up and was able to get us back to where our motor home was sitting so we weren't stranded. He was just that kind of guy. Great in ham radio... real knowledgeable... very, very pleasureable... and a great lover of blues music.

NEIL: Charlie Emerson, N4OKL, was 71. Reporting for Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Neil Rapp WB9VPG. Now with continuing coverage of this story, here is Don Wilbanks, AE5DW.

DON: Thanks Neil. The Huntsville Hamfest and Amateur Radio Newsline share a long history. Since the early '90s it has been the home of our Young Ham Of the Year award presentation. There was no bigger cheerleader for that than Charlie Emerson. He was a tireless promoter of amateur radio in general and the Huntsville Hamfest in particular. If you knew Charlie, you had a friend for life.

Ted Randall, WB8PUM has been bringing his QSO Radio Show and WTWW shortwave to the Huntsville Hamfest for years and, as Ted says here from Tuesday nights QSO Show broadcast, it's all because of Charlie Emerson.

[Ted Randall audio. 4:41]

Despite this great loss, the Huntsville Hamfest board remains dedicated to continuing the tradition of service to the amateur radio community by opening its doors as usual on the third weekend of August. They look forward to honoring Charlie's memory at the 2017 Huntsville Hamfest and we look forward to sharing our memories and love for Charlie with them.

With Neil Rapp, WB9VPG I'm Don Wilbanks, AE5DW.

**

NEWSCAST CLOSE: With thanks to Alan Labs; the ARRL; CQ Magazine; Essex RAYNET; Hap Holly and the Rain Report; the Huntsville Hamfest Association; Joe Moell K0OV; John Melfi W2HCB; K2BSA Amateur Radio Association; Ohio-Penn DX Bulletin; the Port Elizabeth Amateur Radio Society; QRZ.COM; Southgate Amateur Radio News; Ted Randall's QSO Radio Show; Tonto Amateur Radio Association; the Wireless Institute of Australia; Workboat.com; WTWW Shortwave; and you our listeners, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline. Please send emails to our address at newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's only official website located at www.arnewsline.org.

For now, with Caryn Eve Murray, KD2GUT, at the news desk in New York, and our news team worldwide, I'm Jim Damron N8TMW in Charleston, West Virginia saying 73 and as always we thank you for listening.

Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) is Copyright 2017. All rights reserved.